THE

WEEKLY ENTERTAINER.

For MONDAY, May 8, 1809.

Curious Particulars respecting the Water Fowl of Bengal, and other Parts of the East-Indies.

Written by a Gentleman who resided there about eleven Years ago.

THE geese and Braminah ducks are very beautiful birds of a deep orange colour, with white ruffs round their necks, and of a size somewhat larger than Muscovy ducks. Before they venture to indulge themselves in the water, they post a centry on the most elevated spot, with as much regularity as a guard of soldiers; sheep, cattle, and other animals, approach his post without exciting alarm; but no sooner does their grand enemy, man, particularly an European, make his appearance, although at a considerable distance, than the centry gives the signal, which the rest immediately attend to, by leaving off their sports, and preparing for flight. If the person continues to advance towards them, the centry gives another signal, and springs up into the air, where he is followed by the rest of the flock, so that it is extremely difficult to get within shot of them. They are, however, hardly worth much trouble, as they are in general rank and ill-flavoured; but the widgeons, duck, and teal, are excellent, and they abound in every part of the country in astonishing numbers.

The natives have an odd way of catching them, which, on account of its singularity, I cannot avoid mentioning. The sportsman repairs to the scene of action early in the morning, before day-light, with a bag, an earthen pot, some clods of earth and grass, and a few small green boughs; he approaches the lake in the part most remote from his game, and proceeds in his operations with the greatest silence and circumspection; the bag is fastened round his middle, in such a manner that it

may hang down before him; he then slips gently into the water up to his chin, and covers his head with the earthen pot, the sides of which had previously been perforated with several holes, to admit the air, as well as to enable him to see his way; the outside of the pot is covered with the clods of earth and the green boughs, which gives it the resemblance of a detached fragment of the bank. Thus disguised, he creeps along towards his game, taking care not to go beyond his depth; the unsuspecting ducks gambol about, and nibble at the grass on the pot, unconscious of the foe lurking beneath. He now proceeds to business, and catching hold of one of them by the leg, with a sudden, but silent jerk, pulls it under water, dislocates the neck, and then crams it into his bag; the sudden disappearance of the bird excites no alarm in the others, as they naturally conclude that it was merely diving in sport; he goes on in this manner, until he fills his bag, when he retreats with the same caution he advanced, and carries his prize to the next station, to sell to the Europeans, as birds of every description are held in the utmost abhorrence by the Hindus, as an article of food; and the Mahometans, like the Jews, eat nothing but what has had its vital blood shed on the ground, and a particular form of prayer repeated at the time.

A NARRATIVE *of the* SIEGE *of* ZARAGOZA.

(Concluded from Page 346.)

THE attack of the enemy seemed to be directed principally against the gate called Portillo, and the castle near it without the walls, and which is nothing more than a large square building, made use of as a prison, and surrounded by a deep ditch. The sand bag battery before the gate of the Portillo was gallantly defended by the Aragonese. It was several times destroyed, and as often reconstructed under the fire of the enemy. The carnage in this battery throughout the day was truly terrible. It was here, that an act of heroism was performed by a female, to which history scarcely affords a parallel.

Augustina Zaragoza, about twenty-two years of age, a handsome woman, of the lower class of people, whilst performing her duty of carrying refreshments to the gates, arrived at the battery of the Portillo at the very moment when the French fire had absolutely destroyed every person that was stationed in it. The citizens and soldiers for the moment hesitated to reman the guns; Augustina rushed forward over the wounded and slain, snatched a match from the hand of a dead artilleryman, and fired off a 26-pounder, then jumping upon the gun, made

made a solemn vow never to quit it alive during the siege; and having stimulated her fellow-citizens by this daring intrepidity to fresh exertions, they instantly rushed into the battery, and again opened a tremendous fire upon the enemy.

When the writer of these pages saw this heroine at Zaragoza, she had a small shield of honour embroidered upon the sleeve of her gown, with "Zaragoza" inscribed upon it, and was receiving a pension from the government, and the daily pay of an artilleryman.

On the 2d of July, as soon as the morning broke, a column of the enemy marched out of their battery, almost within musket-shot of the Portillo, and the remainder of their force was seen drawn up, as though with an intent to second the attack of the advancing column, or to profit by its success, should it penetrate into Zaragoza. With fixed bayonets, and without discharging a shot, the column of the enemy marched towards the battery of the Portillo; but as soon as they reached the castle, a destructive fire of grape and musketry was opened upon their flank, the consequence of which was, that the French column immediately dispersed, notwithstanding the most gallant exertions of their officers.

Another column of infantry was instantly directed by the French general to advance against the gate of the Carmen, on the left of the Portillo. This gate was defended by a sand-bag battery, and by musquetry, which, lining the walls on each side, commanded two out of three approaches to the gate; this column was also repulsed with considerable loss.

It should seem by these attacks, which were considered as extremely injudicious by the military people of Zaragoza, that the French conceived their destructive bombardment must have convinced the Aragonese of the absurdity of attempting to sustain a siege in so defenceless a city, which, in their opinion, could not fail to surrender whenever a division of their troops should have penetrated into the town. The result proved how mistaken an estimate the French had made of the firmness and decision of the Aragonese character.

Defeated in these two attacks, the enemy proceeded to invest the place still more closely. Above the city the Ebro was fordable, and below it the French, in spite of the efforts of the Aragonese, had constructed a bridge on the 14th of July. Having by these means transported their cavalry to the opposite bank of the river, they destroyed the mills which supplied the town with flour, levied contributions in the different villages, and thus cut off the only communication by which the besieged could receive any supplies, either of provisions or ammunition. Every difficulty, however, which they hourly may momentarily experienced, served only to heighten the resentment of the people, and to call forth the resources of their

active and intelligent general. In this critical situation he caused corn-mills, worked by horses, to be established in various parts of the city, and ordered the monks to be employed under skilful directors in manufacturing gunpowder. All the sulphur which the place afforded was put into immediate requisition, the earth of the streets was carefully washed in order to furnish saltpetre; and charcoal was made of the stalks of hemp, which in that part of Spain grows to a very unusual size; and on this simple foundation there has been formed, since the siege, a regular manufactory of gunpowder, which yields thirteen arobas of Castile per day, or three hundred and twenty-five pounds of twelve ounces.

At the close of the month of July, the Aragonese found their city completely invested by the enemy. Their large population was now but scantily supplied with food, and had little or no hope of succour. By the unremitting exertions of forty-six days, their spirits were exhausted, and their bodily strength necessarily impaired. Without a single place of security for their sick and their children, they were in hourly expectation of another general attack, and a second more formidable bombardment; while their streets were filled with wounded, in consequence of daily skirmishes with the enemy, entered into in order to open a communication with the country. At this moment one desperate effort was made, though in vain, to recover the important position of the Torrero; after which the Aragonese, convinced of the impossibility of making a sortie with effect, resolved to conquer, or to perish within the walls of their city.

On the night of the 2d of August, and on the following day, the French bombarded Zaragoza from their batteries opposite the Carmen. A foundling-hospital, which contained the sick and wounded, who from time to time had been conveyed there during the siege, unfortunately caught fire, and was rapidly consumed. During this dreadful calamity, the exertions of every description of people were almost unparalleled; all attention to private property was instantly abandoned, and every body was seen hastening to the relief of the sick and helpless children who occupied this building; but in this act of humanity none were more conspicuous than the women, who persisted in their humane exertions, equally undaunted by the shot and shells of the enemy, and the flames of the building before them.

On the 3d of August the French had completed their batteries upon the right bank of the Guerva, a rivulet that falls into the Ebro, and is separated only from the walls of Zaragoza by the breadth of a common road. Nearly opposite to the centre of these batteries, and within pistol-shot, was the gate of the Santa Engracia, so called from a splendid convent

and

and church situated on one side of it. On the 4th of August the French opened a tremendous fire upon this quarter of the city, and in an instant the mud-walls opposite to their batteries vanished, and the splendid convent of the Santa Engracia was on fire and tottering in ruins.

The French columns immediately availed themselves of this entrance, to rush into the city, took in reverse the batteries before the adjacent gates, and, after a severe and sanguinary conflict, penetrating to the Calle de Cozo nearly in the centre of the town, were in possession before the day closed of one-half of Zaragoza. The French general immediately demanded the capitulation in the following note:—

Quartel General—Santa Engracia.
La Capitulation.

The answer immediately returned was,—

Quartel General—Zaragoza.
Guerra al cuchillo.

PALAFOX.

TRANSLATION.

Head-Quarters, Santa Engracia.
The Capitulation.

Head Quarters, Zaragoza.
War "even" to the knife.

The knife is a very formidable weapon in the hands of the Aragonese in close combat.

One side of the street Cozo, the breadth of which is about equal to that of Pall Mall, was now occupied by the French, in the centre of which General Verdier was seen giving his orders from the Franciscan convent. The Aragonese maintained their positions on the opposite side, throwing up batteries at the openings of the streets, within a few paces of similar batteries of the French. The intervening space was soon heaped up with dead, either thrown from the windows of the houses in which they had been slain, or killed in the conflicts below.

Nothing in the whole course of the siege more embarrassed Don Joseph Palafox than this enormous accumulation of the dead, and the apprehension of the contagious disorders which must infallibly result from it. To an Aragonese it was almost certain death to appear in the middle of the street; and the expedient resorted to was to push forward French prisoners, with a rope attached to them, amidst the dead and the dying, to remove the bodies of their countrymen, and bring them in

for

for burial. The office in which they were employed, and the pity of their own soldiers, secured them in general from any annoyance, and by this expedient the evils arising from the horrible corruption of the dead was in some degree diminished. The principal season for attack in this singular species of warfare was the night; the French and the Aragonese, under the cover of darkness, frequently dashed across the street, and attacked each other's batteries with the most undaunted courage; the struggle begun at the batteries was often carried into the houses beyond, and the author of this narrative has often seen, in every story of an house in the Calle de Cozo, unequivocal marks of the madness and desperation with which such sort of contests must have been carried on. The batteries of the contending parties were so close to each other, that, in one instance, a Spaniard crept from his own side, and insinuating himself under the intermediate bodies of the dead, attached a rope to one of the French cannon; in the struggle which ensued, the rope broke, and the Aragonese were deprived of their prize at the very moment when they thought themselves secure of it.

On the 5th of August, when the French were expected to renew their efforts to obtain complete possession of the city, the Aragonese found their ammunition begin to fail; but even this circumstance created no dismay, nor did it suggest to any one the idea of capitulation. The only cry that assailed the ears of the gallant general, as he rode amongst the people, was, that if ammunition failed, they were ready to attack the enemy with their knives alone. At this awful crisis, just before the day closed, a convoy of provisions and ammunition, and a reinforcement of three thousand men, composed of Spanish guards, Swiss, and volunteers of Aragon, unexpectedly made their entry into the city, under the command of the brother of the captain-general, Don Francisco Palafox.

A council of war that was held on the 8th, came to the following ever-memorable resolves:—"That those quarters of the city, in which the Aragonese yet maintained themselves, should continue to be defended with the same firmness which had hitherto been so conspicuous; should the enemy at last prevail, the people were immediately to retire by the bridge over the Ebro into the suburbs, and, having destroyed the bridge, to defend the suburbs 'till they perished." This resolution of the general and his officers was received by the people with the loudest acclamations.

For eleven successive days the most sanguinary conflict was continued from street to street, from house to house, and from room to room, (the enraged populace always gaining by degrees upon the disciplined troops of the French) until the space

space occupied by the enemy was gradually reduced to about one-eighth part of the city.

One character which developed itself during the siege of Zaragoza must not be overlooked in this narrative. In every part of the town, where the danger was most imminent, and the French the most numerous, was Padre St. Iago Sass, curate of a parish in Zaragoza. As General Palafox made his rounds through the city, he often beheld Sass alternately playing the part of a priest and a soldier; sometimes administering the sacrament to the dying, and at others, fighting in the most determined manner against the enemies of his country; from his energy of character and uncommon bravery, the commander in chief reposed the utmost confidence in him during the siege; wherever any thing difficult or hazardous was to be done, Sass was selected for its execution; and the introduction of a supply of powder, so essentially necessary to the defence of the town, was effected in the most complete manner by this clergyman, at the head of forty of the bravest men in Zaragoza. He was found so serviceable in inspiring the people with religious sentiments, and in leading them on to danger, that the general has placed him in a situation where both his piety and courage may continue to be as useful as before; and he is now both captain in the army and chaplain to the commander in chief.

The spirit displayed by the men was seconded in the most admirable manner by the women of Zaragoza. The Countess Burita, a lady of great rank in that country, formed a corps of women for the relief of the wounded, and for the purpose of carrying provisions and wine to the soldiers; many persons of the most unquestionable veracity in Zaragoza declare that they have frequently seen this young, delicate, and beautiful woman, coolly attending to the duties she had prescribed to herself in the midst of the most tremendous fire of shot and shells; nor were they even able to perceive, from the first moment that she entered into these novel scenes, that the idea of personal danger could produce upon her the slightest effect, or bend her from her benevolent and patriotic purpose. The loss of women and boys during the siege was very great, and fully proportionate to that of men; in fact, they were always the most forward; and the difficulty was to teach them a prudent and proper sense of their danger.

During the night of the 13th of August, the French fire was particularly destructive, and when their batteries ceased, flames were observed to burst out in many parts of the buildings in their possession; and on the morning of the 14th, to the great surprise of the Aragonese, their columns were seen at a distance retreating over the plain, on the road to Pamplona. Their departure had probably been hastened by intelligence

that the junta of Valencia had dispatched six thousand men to join the levies in Aragon, destined to relieve the capital.

Thus terminated the siege of Zaragoza, which, whether it be considered with reference to the superiority of the means of annoyance in possession of the enemy, to the utter incapability of the place to resist a regular and continued attack, to the instances of collective and individual courage, to the patience and heroism of its defenders, of either sex and in every situation of life, can be deemed second to none recorded in the annals of ancient or modern times.

It is a very singular fact to add, that though the writer of these few pages saw in Zaragoza many a parent who had lost his children, and many a man reduced from competence to poverty, he literally did not meet with one human being who uttered the slightest complaint; every feeling seemed to be swallowed up in the memory of what they had recently done, and in a just hatred of the French.

Sketches of Holland, under King Louis Napoleon, 1806.

(Continued from Page 356.)

WHEN you enter the habitation of a Dutch peasant, you are as much surprised at the cleanliness, as at the comfort which reigns in it; it is chiefly in Holland, properly so called, in that part of the north of Holland known by the name of the Beemster, and in West-Friesland, that you are the more struck with this spectacle, which forms such a contrast with the state of poverty and humiliation, to which this interesting class of society is even now reduced in most countries of Europe. In order that the reader may judge of the truth of this observation, it will not be extraneous to give an idea of a peasant, in easy circumstances, of Rhynland, or Delfland, in his holiday dress.

The men in general, with scarce any exception, wear a small cocked hat; they usually have a silk handkerchief, or muslin cravat, round their neck, which they put on in such a manner as to give a view of two gold buttons which fasten their shirt collar; they mostly wear two waistcoats, with several rows of very small silver buttons, thickly put on; a blue cloth coat, and the waistband of their breeches is ornamented with four very large silver buttons.

The manufacture of linens in the provinces of Groninguen, Over-Issel, and Friesland, occupies the first rank in this principal branch of industry. Those linens which receive the name of Holland, are distinguished by their fineness, whiteness, and evenness. It is not, however, the case, that all the

linens which the Dutch export, are made amongst themselves. A very principal part is manufactured in the duchy of Berg, Westphalia, Osnabruck, and that neighbourhood, particularly Munster; but as all these linens go to the bleach-fields at Harlem, where they receive their finishing dressings, the Dutch profit by this circumstance, to sell them as their own. These bleach-fields extend from Harlem to Alkmaar, and the extreme whiteness which they give their linens, is attributed to the quality of the waters of the downs, and of the earth on which they are exposed.

Paper was a very considerable article of trade in Holland; the Dutch were in the habit of supplying France, Spain, and Portugal, with considerable quantities; but at present, owing to several causes, they scarcely use any other than French paper, for books of a small size, and frequently for those of a larger. The services rendered to printing by the Dutch are well known. The editions of Virgil and Terence, from the press of the Elzevirs', are a chef d'œuvre in this art; but since that, printing has been on the decline. Amsterdam, however, and some few other towns, still have some distinguished presses. Bookselling was, for more than a century, a very chief branch of trade in Holland. It was enriched by the productions of France, in granting an asylum to men of letters, persecuted by intolerance; but this advantage which she derived from circumstances, has disappeared with the liberty of the press, which has occasioned the French booksellers to engross this branch of commerce.

Holland derived considerable revenues from several branches of commerce, which now, owing to the state of Europe, are almost, if not wholly, on the decline. Her fisheries were carried on to a great extent. That of the whale affords but the poor remains of what it formerly was; in 1771, from the different ports in Holland, one hundred and ten vessels were fitted out for Greenland, and forty for Davis's Streights; in 1785 there were no more than sixty-eight; and the fishery continued on the decline 'till 1799, when the English intercepted the convoy on its return from Greenland, and completed its destruction. Amsterdam and Rotterdam enjoyed the greatest share of the whale-fisheries. The wealth of this commerce is now chiefly enjoyed by the English and Americans; some few other powers have a small part; of this number are the Danes, and the Portuguese and Spaniards in their colonies in the new world.

The produce of the fisheries was important to Holland; it is ascertained, that it supported at least twenty thousand families; the number of vessels which sailed annually from the several ports employed in the fisheries, was estimated at five or six hundred.

The East and West-India trade was also a mine of wealth to Holland; they had a considerable share of it. The East and West-India companies still exist; but deprived of her colonies by the English, Holland derives no benefit from the new world.

The principal interior trade of Holland is certainly that with Germany. The navigation of the Rhine, luckily, gives the Dutch an opportunity of engrossing the trade with the different countries that river passes, and also of the other rivers in Germany, which empty their waters into the Rhine. It opens to them an easy communication with the departments of the Saare, the Rhine, and Mosselle, Mount Tonnerre, and Francfort, which, before the war, they supplied with the productions of the north and south. At that period, Cologne engrossed the principal traffic of the Rhine; from that river the Dutch received their timber for building; which come down an immense floats every year from Andernach, to Dort. The consumption of this article in Holland may easily be guessed at, by giving a glance at its shipping, at the buildings which stand upon piles, at the dykes, and the multitude of mills which serve for so many different purposes.

Tobacco is an article of some consequence, even now; that of Amersfort, and its vicinity, in the department of Utrecht, is of a superior quality, and holds the first place in trade after that of Virginia. The leaf is large, soft, unctuous, and of a good colour. It has the rare advantage of communicating its flavour to tobaccos of an inferior quality; there is a great deal of this latter sort in Holland, but that which grows in the department of Guelderland passes for the worst.

The Dutch are not, however, confined to the tobacco which their own soil produces; they consume a great quantity beside, which they get from North America, principally from Maryland; and some from the Caraccas. The tobacco, both in leaf and manufactured, is exported in considerable quantities to Germany, and the north of Europe. The manufactory of it was for a long time an object of great importance to Holland; the city of Amsterdam alone, at one period, employed no less than three thousand hands; but this branch of trade has also much decayed from what it originally was.

Pipes, pens, tiles, bricks, and earthenware, are the chief articles now manufactured in Holland; the pottery of Bergen up Zoom, is in great estimation; and that of Delft likewise, which gives its name to the yellow ware.

If we attentively examine what were the sources from which Holland derived her riches, it is easy to observe, that, besides the principal causes which have contributed to paralyse the commerce of the country, there are others which are independent even of these circumstances. The great increase of money,

ney, augmenting the price of labour, could not fail to affect those manufactories which were already lessened by the erection of similar ones in the neighbouring states, during the last century. It is well known, that in Denmark, Sweden, and Russia, certain branches of industry were unknown, even at the conclusion of the 17th century. The East India company chiefly felt the effects of this decrease. The progress which the English made in India, and that of the French, Danish, and Swedish companies, lessened its traffic, and consequently the returns and profits.

That which supported the trade of Holland, down to the period of the French revolution, was the immense capital to be found in that country. Amsterdam became the general bank, and prescribed the course of exchange to Europe; the facility with which the merchants could draw upon their correspondents in that city, for the amount of the goods they sold, has preserved in Holland certain branches of commerce, which otherwise would not have flourished.

(To be concluded in our next.)

FASHIONS FOR LADIES AND GENTLEMEN.

[From Ackermann's Repository of Arts, Fashions, Manufactures, &c.]

BALL DRESS.

WHITE satin slip, under a crape dress, made to fit the figure very exactly, cut open in front, and bound all round with white satin ribbon and a row of beads, linked together in front with bands of beads loosely suspended at separate distances; short sleeves the same. Fan richly spangled. Pearl necklace, with diamond clasp in front; ear-rings and bracelets to suit. White shoes striped in scarlet or blue. Hair in ringlets on the forehead, and lightly turned up behind with a diamond comb. Petticoats very short.

WALKING DRESS.

Dress of white Scotia washing silk. Bishop's mantle of sage or olive-green striped and plain silks, made entirely without seams; border of the same colour. Hat to correspond, and decorated with artificial flowers. Shoes sage, or olive-green, also to correspond.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

Spanish hats, which have been worn all the winter, with feathers, for full dress, are now converted into walking hats,

substituting flowers instead of feathers. Straw hats and bonnets, ornamented with flowers, and white silk hats, are making their appearance for the season. Light silk mantles, of all colours, are much worn. Spencers, of a beautiful grey, ornamented with silver, not buttoned, but tied loosely at the neck, form a most elegant dress. The Scotia silk, which we introduced in last number, is now in great request for dresses, as is also the spotted muslin. Colours vary with the taste of the individual; silver grey is unquestionably the most elegant and the most fashionable. The attempt to introduce long waists has completely failed; they have not, nor will they ever become fashionable. The full dress of this number is the present standard.

Gentlemen's Fashions.

Under this head we have no other alteration to record in the present month, except that leather breeches, of a very deep colour, approaching to brown, and boots, are much worn by gentlemen. It will be recollected, that, in our number for March, we announced the probability of such a change.

THE LETTER-BOX.

No. 69.

TO THE EDITOR.

Adulator nullus amicus est.—Ovid.

I Perfectly agree with Ovid that "a flatterer is no friend," and therefore when I threw out some hints to the ladies respecting the prevailing fashions of the day, I conceived my candour more entitled to applause than reproach. How far my expectations were realised, the following letters will determine. The first is from Mistress Elizabeth Backstitch—a name not unknown to those who have perused the Letter-Box from its commencement.

"To Mr. —— ——."

"Sir,

"Your ashurance and impedince is past all bareing; what right have you or any of your forwerd six to trubble your heds about *our* dress? Pray leave us and our pitticotes alone. Look to yourself I say, look to yourself, and I'll be bound you'll find quite enuf imparfections to scribble about without throing out

out your base innewendows on we. In the name of all the fare six, I am,

" Your despizer,

" E. B.

" POSTSCRAP.—Don't think, Mr. Morrility, that we don't know you; not that I say a wurd about a quizzeng glass and scarlat ribbin."

The next letter I shall transcribe, is from a person of more erudition, though of not less severity.

" SIR,

" As you are such a zealous advocate for the use of flannel, and seem such an adept in matters of female dress, I shall feel much obliged by your informing me, whether you are a *man-milliner* or a *woollen-draper*.

" Your's, &c.

" DORINDA."

A third is wonderfully laconic, (to wit)

" A *fig* for you, Mr. Saucy.

" DOROTHEA."

This I shall beg leave to answer.

" A *leaf* for *you*, Miss Dolly."

But not to trouble you with any further invectives, I shall throw the whole cargo of letters into the fire. There they go, and a famous blaze they make of it. They are consumed—and even the sparks, that roam over their black remains, are almost extinct. There goes my lady, and there goes the squire, and (to use two lines of Cowper's,)

" There goes the parson—oh illustrious spark!
And there—scarce less illustrious—goes the clerk."

Can there be a fairer picture of mortality? Urged by some delusive hope or other, in pursuit of honour or wealth, we wander for awhile on this sublunary shore, too thoughtless or too obdurate, to perceive the shortness of our journey. We hurry towards a precipice, heedless of our approach to it, 'till our feet totter on its brink, and we sink into the unfathomable abyss of eternity.

I have here an ample scope for the exercise of solemn meditation; but as I introduced somewhat of the same kind in my last letter, I shall briefly subscribe myself,

Your's, &c.

X.

FOR

FOR THE LETTER-BOX.

A SONNET,

To Miss Edgeworth, the author of popular tales; occasioned by reading her beautiful delineation of a virtuous family in "The Contrast."

Sleeps there a muse, ungrateful, when such charms
Blend their soft magic in the varied page?
Magic that soothes each passion's hostile rage,
And of sharp grief the wounded heart disarms.

Sleeps there a muse? oblivion be *her* fate,
Tho' (judg'd by genius) less deserv'd than mine;
What dreads the heart, with conscious truth elate?
Why stays the pen, when *merit* fires the nine?

Accept then, nymph, (nor deem the gift unmeet
Which candour urges from a soul sincere)
Accept this tribute—claim'd by tales so sweet,
Tales—mingling smiles with pity's balmy tear.

Oh still pourtray the joys of virtue's throng,
Thyself—the charming model of thy song.

X.

Having cut off a flower from that pretty shrub, the monthly or Macartney rose, just after hearing of the death of a young lady, the following ideas occurred to me.

A SONNET.

It grieves me much, thou blooming flower,
Gay pageant of the passing hour,
Thy full-blown glories to dissever;
But they shall spring again—and thou
(Tho' destitute of beauty now)
Rise more superb than ever.

Ah! emblem apt, of Anna's fate!
Short was her sublunary state,
Yet calm and unassail'd by sorrow;
And she, too, shall hereafter rise,
And, from the beams of brighter skies,
Immortal glory borrow.

'Tis her's to reach a happier shore,
Where virtue's blossoms fade no more.

X.

The

The author of the Letter-Box feels much obliged to his good friend B. of Camborne, for his charming poetical effusion on the death of Sir John Moore. After such an auspicious beginning, it is to be hoped that Mr. B. will continue to adorn the pages of the Entertainer with frequent communications.

MR. EDITOR,

At the commencement of this literary recreation, I gave a general invitation to your readers to become partakers of my amusement; but only one instance of acceptance has occurred. I therefore again *repeat* that invitation. And I would, with all deference, recommend young men to form little societies for the promotion of literature, and the exercise of their ingenuity; and to make your pleasing miscellany the receptacle of their transactions. Let them recollect that "the spring-time of our days" is extremely transient; and that old age is not the period to cultivate talents or pursue fame. And what says Seneca?

"Nihil turpius est quam gravis ætate senex, qui nullum aliud habet argumentum, quo se probet diu vixisse, præter ætatem."

Or, in plain English, "Nothing is more disgraceful to an old man than to produce no other proof of his time's elapse than old age itself."

For my own part, I shall at least endeavour to continue my present speculations, recollecting that "Forsan et hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

Your's, Mr. Editor, very truly,

X.

St. Ives, April 21, 1809.

Biographical Character of the late Mrs. Cowley.

ON the 11th of March, 1809, died, at Tiverton, in Devonshire, in the 66th year of her age, Mrs. Cowley, the elegant authoress of so many dramas, and so much poetry. Neither she herself, nor the family with which she was connected by marriage, were descended from the poet, Cowley; but with the poet, Gay she had some degree of consanguinity—her father's mother was Gay's first cousin. Never having been previously fond of theatrical entertainments, the fancy she conceived for writing was accidental.

Being present at a successful comedy, her imagination was caught; "And I too can write!" said she to her husband, who was in the box with her. She was rallied by him for her presumption. "You shall see," said she; and produced, before dinner the next day, the first act of "The Runaway," verba-

tim as it was afterwards performed, many will recollect with how great success. In quick succession came "The Belle's Stratagem;" the farce of "Who's the Dupe?" (the Greek introduced therein she had from her father;) "Albina," a tragedy; "Which is the Man?" "A bold Stroke for a Husband;" "More Ways than One;" "The School for Grey Beards;" comedies. "The Fate of Sparta," a tragedy; "A Day in Turkey," and "The Town before You," comedies. "The Runaway" was written in a fortnight; and "The Belle's Stratagem" in three weeks. The first produced 800 guineas, the latter 1200. Nothing was laboured; all was spontaneous effusion; she had none of the drudge of literature; fame was not half so much her object, as the pleasure of composition.

They were brought out under the superintendance of her husband, except the one or two last, he having then joined his regiment, in which he had the commission of captain, in the East-Indies. He died there, about ten years since. This gentleman, who was brother to the merchant of the same name, possessed considerable powers of mind, and would sometimes slide in a sentence which was pleasing to the authoress; but would now and then insert a speech which she thought became not her. Three epic poems were published, at intervals between these; "The Maid of Arragon," the scene of which is laid in Spain during the incursions of the Moors; her imagination therein sends out the Christian bishops, at the head of the troops, the cross in one hand and the sword in the other, as in reality they have been seen in the present day; "The Scottish Village," and "The Siege of Acre."

In the different characters of daughter, wife, and mother, Mrs. Cowley's conduct was indeed most exemplary. Her manners were lively and unassuming; her countenance was peculiarly animated and expressive; but there was nothing about her of that style which sometimes indicates the writer. The most incontrovertible proof that her manners were pleasing is, the estimation in which her memory is held by all who had, in so many directions, the happiness of her acquaintance. This remembrance will draw tears from the eyes of many; young women in particular, amongst whom she had many fervent attachments. The general tenor of her life was by no means theatrical; at the theatres, but to oblige others by accompanying them, she was never seen; frequently, for years together, she was not there at all. Though public as a genius, yet private as a woman, she wore her laurels gracefully veiled. In the course of the last ten years, she wrote two or three slight poems, in friendship with the families of Lady Carew, Lady Duntze, Mrs. Wood, and other ladies in her neighbourhood, which probably are yet extant. Nothing remained with her

but two manuscripts; the first written in the close of the last year, without rising from the table, at which she had received an elegy on Lord Nelson, by a clergyman of her neighbourhood. Her poem thus commenced:

" Mercy! what Nelson's ghost again!
Why not run back to Blenheim's plain,
And dig a hero from its turf,
Or call brave Hosier from the surf,
Or John o' Gaunt raise up once more,
Or our Third Edward's name restore?

And then telling him that the creative poet should *lead* public attention, directs it to the family of Braganza, on its voyage to the Brazils; and draws a picture of the probable progress there of Christian knowledge, and of European knowledge.

The other manuscript, signed " A School Boy," on pretence of its being composed by one, was written but a few weeks before her death, and given to the sexton of the parish, whose little property was destroyed in the late floods. It describes the man's efforts, whilst his cottage was overwhelmed; its consequences, &c. and claims a subscription for one who would not directly beg. The list of subscriptions begins with that of " The School Boy," and quickly more than restored *his* property who was so soon to assist at the funeral of his benefactress.

Mrs. Cowley latterly declined visits, except those of ladies, at her own house, on Monday mornings; it was a working party, at which sometimes forty were present, for the benefit of distressed married women. Though not actually ill, she had, for a considerable time, been conscious of rather quickly approaching death; she looked forward to it with a cheerfulness that has seldom been surpassed. She had, through every part of her life, without cant, been deeply religious; prayers, written by her at twelve years of age, were many years kept by those whose preservation was praise. She had never in her life been seriously ill, but had considerable dread of a long-continued death-bed sickness; and had frequently wished even for sudden death, rather than be sensible of gradual decay. She expired, without a groan, in the full possession of her mental powers, after having been only one day confined to her room.

SHAPE *of the* WORLD.

THOSE ancient writers, Chrysostom, Theophylact, and Lactantius contend, that the world is of the shape of a house, because scripture calls it a tabernacle, and that it is impossible the sky can reach the antarctic pole, and southern and western regions.

Answer, by J. Melhuish, of Honiton, to W. Bickham's, Charade, inserted the 27th of February.

HOW pleasant 'tis with some dear friend to stray,
And take an AIRING in the month of May!
When nature in her richest garb appears,
And all creation then a lovely aspect wears.

☞ We have received the like answer from J. Ball and J. French, at Evershot school; N. Gribbell, and W. Lawrence, of Plymouth; and W. D. Champion, of Bridgewater.

Answer, by H. B. of Bridgewater, to W. Kent's Charade, inserted March 6.

IF THY and ME you join aright,
THYME is the herb they'll bring to sight.

†‡† Similar answers have been received from W. Lawrence, N. Gribbell, and R. Withall, of Plymouth; J. W. of Charmouth; W. D. Champion, of Bridgewater; John Melhuish, of Honiton; C. Crews, of Newton Abbot; J. Ball, and J. French, at Evershot school; J. Salter, of Broadhembury; W. Petherick, of St. Austell; G. Pearse, of Bodmin; J. Colley, of St. German's; and J. W. Jones, of North Petherton.

An ANAGRAM, *by W. Petherick, of St. Austle.*

YON trees transpose, in order true,
An Indian isle you'll have in view;
A letter change, again transpose,
A goddess then you will disclose.

A REBUS, *by Vigil, of Shaston.*

MY first, if rightly you define it,
Approximates destruction;
And yet to such pray don't resign it,
Else lost is my deduction.
Ye gents. who for my second crave,
In potence or dilution,
Pray shun it, or towards the grave,
Look for a grand solution;
Now if these parts be properly combin'd,
The whole, in truth, upon this page you'll find.

A CHARADE, *by W. D. Champion, of Bridgewater.*

TO find my first, ye wits sublime,
Explore the Asiatic clime,
But tho' be slight the mask,
Before that you its source can trace
You'll do my next, from place to place,
And have an arduous task.

Earn'd by my whole, in yonder shed
The peasant eats his homely bread,
And there enjoys content;
Not many cares his peace annoy,
No fiend disturbs the heart-felt joy
With which his days are spent.

POETRY.

The GRAVE *of* KING ARTHUR.

By THOMAS WARTON.

(Concluded from Page 360.*)*

THEY ceas'd; when on the tuneful stage
Advanc'd a bard, of aspect sage;
His silver tresses, thin besprent,
To age a graceful reverent lent;
His beard, all white as spangles frore,
That clothe Plinlimmon's forests hoar,
Down to his harp descending flow'd;
With time's faint rose his features glow'd,
His eyes diffus'd a soften'd fire,
And thus he wak'd the warbling wire:

" Listen, Henry, to my rede!
Not from fairy realms I lead
Bright-rob'd tradition, to relate
In forged colours Arthur's fate;
Tho' much of old romantic lore
On the high theme I keep in store:
But bo astful fiction should be dumb,
Where truth the strain might best become,
If thine ear may still be won
With songs of Uther's glorious son,
Henry, I a tale unfold,
Never yet in rhyme enroll'd,
Nor sung nor harp'd in hall or bower;
Which, in my youth's full early flower,
A minstrel, sprung of Cornish line,
Who spoke of kings from old Locrine,
Taught me to chant, one vernal dawn,
Deep in a cliff-encircled lawn,
What time the glistening vapours fled
From cloud-envelop'd Clyder's* head;
And on its sides the torrents gray
Shone to the morning's orient ray.

" When Arthur bow'd his haughty crest,
No princess, veil'd in azure vest,
Snatch'd him, by Merlin's potent spell,
In groves of golden bliss to dwell;
Where, crown'd with wreaths of misletoe,
Slaughter'd kings in glory go:
But when he fell, with winged speed,
His champions, on a milk-white steed,
From the battle's hurricane,
Bore him to Joseph's tower'd fane,
In the fair vale of Avelon:†
There, with chanted orizon,

And

* Or Glyder, a mountain in Caernarvonshire.

† Glastonbury Abbey, said to be founded by Joseph, of Arimathea, in a spot anciently called the Island, or Valley, of Avalonia.

And the long blaze of tapers clear,
The stoled fathers met the bier:
Thro' the dim aisles, in order dread
Of martial woe, the chief they led,
And deep entomb'd in holy ground,
Before the altar's solemn bound.
Around no dusky banners wave,
No mouldering trophies mark the grave:
Away the ruthless Dane has torn
Each trace that time's slow touch had worn;
And long o'er the neglected stone,
Oblivion's vale its shade has thrown:
The faded tomb, with honour due,
'Tis thine, Oh Henry! to renew:
Thither, when conquest has restor'd
Yon recreant isle, and sheath'd the sword,
When peace with palm has crown'd thy brows,
Haste thee to pay thy pilgrim vows,
There, observant of my lore,
The pavement's hallow'd depths explore;
And thrice a fathom underneath
Dive into the vaults of death.
There shall thine eye, with wild amaze,
On his gigantic stature gaze;
There shalt thou find the monarch laid,
All in warrior-weeds array'd;
Wearing in death his helmet crown,
And weapons huge of old renown.
Martial prince, 'tis thine to save
From dark oblivion Arthur's grave!
So may thy ships securely stem
The western frith: thy diadem
Shine victorious in the van,
Nor heed the slings of Ulster's clan:
Thy Norman pike-men win their way
Up the dun rocks of Harald's bay:*
And from the steeps of rough Kildare
Thy prancing hoof the falcon scare:
So may thy bow's unerring yew
Its shafts in Roderic's heart imbrue."§
Amid the pealing symphony
The spiced goblets mantled high;
With passions new the song impress'd
The list'ning king's impatient breast,
Flash the keen lightning from his eyes,
He scorns awhile his bold emprise;
Ev'n now he seems, with eager pace,
The consecrated floor to trace,
And ope, from its tremendous gloom,
The treasure of the wondrous tomb:
Ev'n now he burns in thought to rear,
From its dark bed, the ponderous spear,
Rough with the gore of Pictish kings:
Ev'n now fond hope his fancy wings,
To poise the monarch's massy blade,
Of magic-temper'd metal made:
And drag to day the dinted shield
That felt the storm of Camlan's field.
O'er the sepulchre profound
Ev'n now, with arching sculpture crown'd,
He plans the chantry's choral shrine,
The daily dirge, and rites divine.

* The bay of Dublin. Harald, or Harsager, the Fairhaired King of Norway, is said, in the life of Gryffudh ap Conan, prince of North Wales, to have conquered Ireland, and to have founded Dublin. § Henry is supposed to have succeeded in this enterprise chiefly by the use of the long bow, with which the Irish were unacquainted.